

# City Club hears about Street Kids

by Robert Lothian

Between 300 and 500 children ek out an existence on the streets of downtown Portland, according to police and youth service agencies.

At least two-thirds of the street kids survive through prostitution. Most of their customers are adult men. A majority of the children are between the ages of 14 and 20, although some 13-year-olds and younger show up on the street. Their lives are filled with drugs, crime, violence. Suicide, rape and murder is not uncommon.

Dr. Jennifer James, an expert on homeless youth from Seattle, told the Portland City Club last week to forget about adult prostitution and concentrate on helping the street kids.

The City Club stirred up a hornet's nest when it suggested that prostitution be legalized within a red light zone. James also favors legalization of prostitution. She said trying to deal with prostitution any other way than leaving it alone, is like "trying to nail a banana cream pie to the wall."

The real tragedy on the streets is the growing number of homeless youth. They are there because they find better lives on the street than at home, she told the club.

James, a former faculty member of the University of Washington Medical School with a doctorate in cultural anthropology, conducted an historic survey of young female prostitutes in Seattle in 1981. She found that most had suffered sexual and physical abuse, often beginning at a very young age at home.

The important thing to remember when dealing with the street kids is that they are often driven to the streets by intolerable conditions at home, said James. Moralizing and sending them back home is not the answer. "Home is not a place where these kids can survive," but only a place where they die inside, she said.

The minority of very young children on the street will come around

with tangible help, said James. They need counseling, health services, advice about drugs and pregnancy, and help with food and shelter. "If you can't get them off to a group home, keep them alive and healthy," she said.

Another small minority of "marginal kids" are likely to end up violent sexual psychopaths and there's not much anyone can do about it, according to James. She suggested giving up optimism for some of these kids and put them behind bars with long sentences and plenty of counseling.

Most of the street kids are in the "room for movement group," James said. It's important that agencies and social workers be there when these kids inevitably come around to ask for help, she said. "Think about a kid who has been abused for four years; it may take 14 to help him."

James acknowledged the difficulty for adults to admit that they haven't been perfect parents. But adults should also remember, she said, that "the only thing you're walking away from when you walk away from kids on the street, is the quality of your own life." She injected a note of self-interest: "If these kids aren't taken care of, they're going to rip you off."

Attention should also be focused on adults who victimize the street kids. She called for a registration law for sexual offenders. Abusing children can become a "lifetime addiction," and repeat offenders should be registered and kept away from children by law, she said.

Police should adopt a quota system of arresting as many Johns as prostitutes, and vice squad members should be rotated to other duty every three months so they don't become "disturbed people," James suggested.

She got a laugh when she told the club that most rape, prostitution and street crime could be eliminated by putting a curfew on men.



The United Negro College Fund (UNCF) was recently the recipient of a \$25,000 donation from Adolph Coors Company. Pictured, left to right, are: Moses Brewer, Coors' assistant national program manager; Dr. Charles Meredith, president of the Atlanta University System who received the check on behalf of the UNCF; Marvin "Swede" Johnson, Coors' vice president of public relations; and Ivan Burwell, Coors' national program manager.

## Hiroshima-Nagasaki Days

On August 5 and August 9, 1985, the Portland Freeze Coalition will sponsor two programs for Hiroshima-Nagasaki Days. This year marks the 40th anniversary of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The theme of the programs, "A commemoration of tragedy, a celebration of hope," reflects both the solemnity of the occasion and the renewed hope for peace in the world.

On Monday evening, August 5, the festivities will begin at 6 p.m. at the south end of Waterfront Park with a picnic and performances by children. The main program begins at 7 p.m. and will feature remarks by Pat Broudy of Los Angeles, spokesperson for the National Association of Atomic Veterans and widow of Major Chuck Broudy of the U.S. Marine Corps. The evening will also include

dancer Ruby Burns performing "Frontline Symphony," remarks by U.S. Congressman Les AuCoin, and other special guests.

On Friday afternoon, August 9, the program will begin at noon in Pioneer Courthouse Square. A group of *hibasaha*, Japanese people who have been affected by atomic radiation, will talk about the need for world peace and the abolition of nuclear weapons. Other special guests include Ghanaian master drummer Obo Addy and a troupe of Native Americans performing Chief Seattle's Congressional address. A children's program of music, drama and story-telling will also be included.

Both events are free and open to the public. For more information, contact Kay Reid at 222-0004.

## BUF community meeting

by Lanita Duke

GRASSROOT NEWS, N.W. — More than 300 Portlanders attended a Black United Front community meeting July 10th. The meeting was attended by Police Chief Penny Harrington and Mayor Bud Clark to question and probe and advance recommendations to avoid police actions that result in the death of Afro-Americans in the Afro-American community.

Questions sometimes were politely combative while others were statements regarding attitudes of officers who patrol Northeast Portland. The Graves/Tate deaths occurred on the heels of the Tony Stevenson tragedy, in which an officer applied a sleeper hold resulting in his death. Graves was a mentally impaired adult who became violent. Tate was the innocent hostage. Both were shot by police.

One participant stated, "I'm concerned about recent events. My children no longer look at police as protectors. They are regarded as the oppressor."

Harrington withstood the sharpness of their questions and endured boos only once when residents responded to an answer regarding Mrs. Tate, an 86-year-old woman.

Harrington indicated that after the officer shot her, thinking it was Graves retreating out the back door, he thought he heard her moan.

"I can't tell you what's inside the officer's head. I can only tell you what he thought he saw. And he thought he saw Graves coming out the back door," responded Harrington to a question regarding the physical differences between an 86-year-old woman and a 37-year-old man.

Other questions from the audience related to differences in police response in the Black community. Why did officers not move in on Graves earlier and why were back-up lights not available?

Harrington said she was not in the

position nor did she have the information to compare police responses. She said officers on the scene thought they could disarm and control Graves, and any type of lighting aggravated Graves and made officers targets.

Ronnie Herndon, co-chair of the BUF, gathered recommendations from the audience. The BUF said the Graves/Tate incident highlighted the need for more Black officers. The Front requested a national blue ribbon panel to review Portland police procedures and policies. They also called for the city and the police to meet and formulate procedures on how to deal with the mentally impaired when they become threatening and violent.

Herndon also questioned the qualifications of one of Graves' negotiators, R. L. Anderson. When Harrington called him a "Reverend," a choir of chuckles arose from the audience. It has been reported that Anderson just walked upon the scene without prior knowledge of Graves or the Tate family.

Other recommendations advanced by the audience were:

- More cultural training for officers.
- More respect of the Black community by police.
- A change in police attitudes.
- More police accountability to the community for their behavior while on duty.
- Annual psychological tests on officers.
- Involvement and input into the budget advisory committee of the police bureau.
- More effective implementation of existing police procedures.
- A police block home in every neighborhood.
- More money for mental health.
- Better training for officers.

Harrington received a standing ovation and Mayor Bud Clark sat quietly writing down comments from participants.

## Committee recommendations in sleeper hold

by Lanita Duke

GRASSROOT NEWS, N.W. — Purposely avoiding the issue of race in the police application of the carotid (sleeper) hold, a citizen committee recommended to Police Chief Penny Harrington that the hold be used in circumstances and situations where a gun is required — deadly force.

"This recommendation places it on the highest level, as with the use of firearms," said the committee on Police use of force.

The committee consisted of Rev. Rodney Page, chairperson of Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon, Kernan Bagle, U.S. Marshall, Herb Cawthorne, President of the Urban League, Carol Edmo, Commissioner from Metropolitan Human Relations Commission, Fred Lenzser from the District Attorney's office and Donald Van Blairicon, Chief of Bellevue, Washington, police.

The committee was assembled at the request of Chief Harrington after public concern over the sleeper hold death of Tony Stevenson, a 31-year-old Black security officer during a public confrontation in Northeast

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## BUF calls for Dept. of Justice investigation

by Lanita Duke

GRASSROOT NEWS, N.W. — Disappointed over the decision of the District Attorney not to hold a public inquest into the Graves/Tate deaths, the Black United Front called on the Civil Rights division of the U.S. Department of Justice to investigate their deaths.

Tommy Graves and Mrs. Alberta Tate were shot by police officers after Graves, a mentally ill adult, sat on his front porch and fired at police in a six-hour siege.

"Holding a public inquest was the only way the public could learn all the facts leading up to that tragedy," said Ron Herndon, co-chair of the Black United Front.

Among the questions asked by the Front are: Why were officers given orders to shoot when they could not see their target? Why did Mrs. Tate lay on her back porch bleeding for an hour? Why did an exchange of gunfire occur when both individuals in the house were down?

"A public inquest is the only forum where you can subpoena those who have the information as to what went on," Herndon said.

But District Attorney Michael Schrunk disagrees. "In the Graves/Tate case an inquest is inappropriate. An inquest determines who died, cause of death and manner. All this is

## Harassment

(Continued from Page 1, Col. 6)

Administration (OSHA) to conduct a workplace inspection.

"It is our opinion, based upon our own sampling and V.A. records, that employees working in the maintenance area of the basement were not given the required asbestos medical exams. Nor were they given the opportunity to wear assigned respirators in atmosphere to check the fit. . . Employees were apparently working in an area where there was a possibility of the release of asbestos fibers and no monitoring was performed by the V.A.," noted William Newman, OSHA's area director in a letter dated June 7, 1984.

"That really upset management," Wilkes said.

Thurston D. Muskell, National Organizer for AFGE, said Wilkes' dilemma was not unique to Portland. "It's happening more and more all over the V.A. system. There is harassment of union officials and employees who speak out. Management is making it difficult to participate in the union," he added.

Muskell said management harasses employees or union representatives through lower level managers. "What happened to Sylena in Portland occurred only because she is efficient, effective and dedicated." Wilkes said patterns of harassment have also focused on the union's vice-president and secretary.

known," said Schrunk.

"It's a question of policy and resources. Is the Portland Police Department properly equipped to handle this new mentally ill population?" he asked.

Robert Phillips, chairperson of the Greater Northeast Police Precinct Council, said a public inquest was a "worthless sort of activity because it has no power. A Grand Jury has a built-in bias because you don't have lawyers to cross-examine people," he added.

Phillips said police/community relations are not good, and called for better kinds of communications to occur.

"When you hit rock bottom, it's hard to pick a place to start from. You need to build from a foundation. In order for a beginning to occur, there needs to be a clarification of roles. The community needs to know that it's police policy once officers draw their guns to shoot to kill," Phillips said.

Herndon called upon Rep. John Conyers' subcommittee on Criminal Justice to hold hearings regarding this matter. This request amplifies other calls for a national review of existing police policy and procedure.

Currently, the Graves/Tate incident is being heard before a Grand Jury.

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